Tells the Facts and Names the Names

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Our Little Secrets

O'Neill, Bush & Oil

By Alexander Cockburn

Here we had former US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill disclosing that George Bush came into office planning to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and MSNBC polled its audience with the question, Did O'Neill betray Bush? The press always loves to make a show of looking under the bed, when the fox is propped up on the pillow, gulping down Little Red Riding Hood.

What bothers the White House is one particular National Security Council document shown in the 60 Minutes interview, probably drafted by the supreme governing power which was of course vice president Dick Cheney's shadowy Energy Task Force. The document showed plans for the post-invasion dispersal of Iraq's oil assets among the world's great powers, starting with the major oil companies.

That NSC document told 60 Minutes' vast audience the attack on Iraq was not about national security in the wake of 9/ll. It was not about weapons of mass destruction. It was not about Saddam Hussein's possible ties to Osama bin Laden. It was about stealing Iraq's oil.

O'Neill says in those early strategy meetings Bush did say the plan from the start was to attack Iraq, using any pretext. Shortly after the 60 Minutes interview ABC News broadcast Rumsfeld's furious denial of this, then said it has found another (unidentified) cabinet member who confirmed what O'Neill said. Peter Jennings then moved rapidly, without comment, to other matters. Bush's language about "smart sanctions", as his pre 9/11 policy toward

(**OLS** *continued on page 2*)

Serving Two Flags (Part One)

Perle, Wolfowitz, Feith, Ledeen and the Pentagon's Internal Security Problem

By STEPHEN GREEN

In the early days of the Bush administration, when so many "neo-conservatives" were being appointed to high office, particularly at DoD, much attention was paid to their radical writings and institutional associations. Their internal security backgrounds, however, received far less public scrutiny. And in this instance, past actions speak far louder than writings or institutional associations. Had these backgrounds been examined during the Congressional confirmation hearings of the "neo-cons" We might not now be wondering just whose war we have been fighting in Iraq.

As it is, Democrats have a rich field of issues to mine in the run-up to the 2004 elections- the march to war in Iraq and consequent damage to key U.S. foreign relations; the misrepresentation or outright falsification of intelligence on weapons of mass destruction and the subsequent failure to find these weapons; flagrant violations (and thus weakening) of the Geneva Conventions and other international instruments with respect to treatment of "detainees" and civilians; the failure to adequately plan for post-war security, governance and reconstruction: and the additional debt incurred by an already burdened economy.

Much of the blame for these outcomes has been focused upon the most prominent of the neo-conservatives - in particular upon Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary Douglas Feith and Defense Policy Board member Richard Perle. But this may misconstrue the objectives of these individuals and their neo-con colleagues at the Office of the Vice-President, NSC, the Department of State, etc.

If one looks at the outcomes of the Iraq war and following quagmire in terms of the objectives of the Sharon administration in Israel, there's been little but success. Israel has not had to pay for the cost of the invasion and its results: attention has been diverted from Sharon's trashing of the Middle East peace process; America has adopted Sharon's policy of unilateral military intervention and his attitude toward the UN and international human rights organizations; and the largest single military threat to the State of Israel has been eliminated. It's fair to ask, then, whose interests were being advanced by these individuals?

Richard Perle:

Member, Defense Policy Board

The first of the Bush administration neocons to undertake classified U.S. government work, Perle came to Washington in 1969, and, at the age of 28, was offered a position on the staff of Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson. And about a year after that, in 1970, Perle was embroiled in his first internal security inquiry.

An FBI wiretap authorized for the Israeli Embassy picked up Perle discussing with an Embassy official classified information which he said had been supplied by a staff member of the National Security Council. An NSC/FBI investigation to identify the staff member quickly focused upon Helmut

(**Neo-Cons** *continued on page 4)*

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(**OLS** *continued from page 1)*

Iraq, from a press conference at the start of last year was as brazen and far more momentous a lie as any of those that earned Bill Clinton the Republicans' impeachment charges.

TRASHING THE CONSTITUTION: THE US SUPREME COURT, PADILLA AND HAMDI

BY MARK NORTON

In December, 2001, with the Pentagon and the World Trade Center still smoldering, a former prosecutor from Los Angeles called Vincent Bugliosi delivered an epitaph to a movement that he had helped to create, to impeach the "Felonious Five" of the Supreme Court, who had thrown thousands of uncounted Florida ballots into the trash, and illegally handed the 2000 election to a character named George W. Bush. "Obviously", Bugliosi said, "September 11 dealt a solar plexus blow to this whole movement... But I think that in the dispassionate light of the future, history is going to be harsh on us. We already know the moral bankruptcy and the destitution of character of these five Justices. They have proven that. But if we Americans meekly allow what the Court did to stand, without demonstrating our absolute outrage... history is going to be harsh not just on the Supreme Court but on the American people for allowing this to happen without marching in the streets. History will say we should have been in the streets."

Two years later, this very same Supreme Court is once again poised to do Bush's bidding, to confirm Bush's authority to disappear anyone whom he chooses to declare an "enemy combatant", to violate the fundamental tenets of what passes for democracy in this land of the free, and to tear up the Constitution just as they tore up the uncounted ballots in Florida.

"Hail to the Thief"

In January, 2001, the corporate press blocked out any real coverage of the largest counter-inaugural demonstrations in Washington DC since Vietnam War days. "Hail to the Thief" was the slogan of the day, even as Al Gore was obsequiously making his peace with the new regime. One almost expected Bush to deliver Richard Nixon's famous line, "I am not a crook", in his inaugural address.

In February, 2001, the Nation published Vincent Bugliosi's broadside, "None Dare Call It Treason", thrashing William Rehnquist, Sandra Day O'Connor, Antonin Scalia, Arthur Kennedy and Clarence Thomas for organizing the judicial coup that brought us the Bush regime. Bugliosi methodically dissected their absurd ruling, which attempted to use the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to deny thousands of Florida voters the right to have their votes counted. The equal protection argument was so ridiculous that the Court had rejected this very same line of reasoning just three weeks earlier in a prior Bush appeal. Bugliosi is the former Los Angeles prosecutor who put away Charles Manson and then wrote a best-selling book about the case, Helter Skelter. Applying his legal and journalistic talents to the Florida gerrymander, Bugliosi ignited a fire-storm.

A grassroots movement began to form to call for the impeachment of the Felonious Five, powered by organizations such as Voter March (www.votermarch.org). In June, an 82-year-old former Oregonian Congressman, Charles Porter, succeeded in getting the Oregon Democratic Party to publicly call for an "immediate investigation of the behavior of the US Supreme Court... for decisions in December that led to Americans being denied their right to choose a President of the United States". When the party posted this resolution on its website, hundreds of comments poured in, such as: "Thank God some Democrats found some cojones", and "I refuse to get over it".

By summer the pot was boiling, everywhere except inside the beltway. "The only people who haven't responded are the people who could do something about it", said one embittered Oregon Democrat.

The National Lawyers Guild, lawyers located politically somewhere to the left of the American Civil Liberties Union, invited Bugliosi to address their scheduled late-September national convention, and to participate in a debate about taking up a national campaign to impeach the Felonious Five.

And Then It All Changed

On September 11, 2001, a few suicide bombers and three airplanes somehow transformed George W. Bush into a national figure of Churchillian proportions. Before September 11, the emperor had no clothes but the crown put on his head by the Supreme Court. He was a bumbling, cartoon-character of a President, barely able to utter a complete sentence, propped up by a camarilla of political scallywags and their courtesans in the corporate media. After September 11, he was suddenly transformed into a political Atlas, bearing the load of the world and the empire on his strong back. The teleprompters started working again, and the press was able loyally to relay his pronouncements and implication.

Most of the left ran for cover. In December, 1999, the festival in Seattle had introduced a whole new generation of activists to the radicalizing effect of billy clubs, tear gas and other so-called non-lethal weaponry. In the wake of September 11, a huge anti-globalization rally planned for Washington DC in the Fall nearly fizzled, as most of the so-called leaders of the new movement baled out. Those who held the course were reviled for supposedly not honoring the dead and wounded in New York and Washington.

But not everybody could run for cover. Thousands of immigrants found themselves the object of a series of a federal roundups, grabbed off the streets and held incommunicado for unknown periods of time in unknown places. The official total of those detained in the initial roundup rose to well over a thousand, when the Justice Department and the media stopped counting, at least publicly. Next, five thousand male immigrants from Middle Eastern countries were targeted by investigators for "voluntary interviews", in just the first of several such campaigns. The FBI started rummaging

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through foreign students' college records.

FBI Director Robert Mueller, the representative of the same political ideology that opposes affirmative action quotas, set "specific numerical goals" for "terrorism investigations", based on the number of mosques in given communities. Talk of the need for torture of "terrorism suspects" became commonplace.

And then there was Guantanamo, "Special Registration", and plans for military tribunals. Meanwhile, the cowards in Congress passed an omnibus bill of gargantuan proportions, dubbed the Patriot Act, full of constitution-busting provisions, vetted by Bush's alter ego Attorney General John Ashcroft. Tom Ridge, another of Bush's buddies, and the man who had signed Mumia Abu-Jamal's death warrant, was chosen to run the new federal office of Homeland Security.

To top it all off, Bush and company have asserted the right to declare any individual, citizen or non-citizen, an "enemy combatant" and strip them of all rights, including the right to speak to a lawyer or their family, or even to know what, if any, charges have been leveled against them. According to Bush's theory, "enemy combatants" can be held in limbo, essentially forever.

It goes on and on, of course. Many books have been written, and many books will be written about the transgressions of this age of empire. Now, two wars later, we have a whole lot more dead people, a whole lot more repression, the same unelected President, and the same Supreme Court.

In 2000, Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, one of the dissenters from the Felonious Five, wrote "Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year's presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation's confidence in [the Supreme Court] as an impartial guardian of the rule of law". Steven's quote, all but forgotten, sounds quaint today.

Confidence in the court? Where have they been these last, long two years?

On January 12 of this bold new year, the Supreme Court unanimously let stand a legal challenge to the Bush administration's policy of keeping secret the names of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who were "detained" after September 11. This decision allows Bush and Ashcroft to continue withholding the names of immigrant "detainees", as well as other information related to their arrests, until hell freezes over.

"I am feeling kind of discouraged now", said Kate Martin, according to the Los Angeles Times. Martin is the director of the Center for National Security Studies, which brought the suit the Supreme Court spiked. "But," she continued, "Congress could remedy this by prohibiting secret deportation hearings." Any day now.

But the Supreme Court has much more on its plate. On January 9, just a weekend before issuing its non-decision on disappeared immigrants, the Court agreed to consider the case of Yaser Esam Hamdi, a US citizen who was grabbed in Afghanistan, declared an "enemy combatant", sent to Guantanamo, and then held incommunicado ever since in a Navy brig stateside.

Oral arguments in Hamdi's case will be heard in April with a ruling expected by July. The Hamdi case was filed by his father and a lawyer, Frank Dunham, who has never been allowed to meet with his client.

In case the point isn't clear, another citizen "enemy combatant" is Jose Padilla, a Bronx, New York-born Muslim of Puerto Rican descent, who was arrested in connection with an alleged plot to detonate a "dirty bomb" somewhere in the US. Padilla was grabbed in Chicago, not Afghanistan or Iraq. The evidence against him? Who knows. When Padilla was detained, Ashcroft held a press conference, and that was that.

The Supreme Court has been given a free pass to condone lawlessness in high places.

It is expected that the Supreme Court will be asked to make a ruling on the Padilla case. The often-liberal US Court of Appeals in New York has issued a ruling favorable to Padilla, ordering the Bush Administration to release or transfer him. Bush's lawyers are fast-tracking an appeal to the Supremes, hoping that the Court will overrule the New York decision, combine Padilla and Hamdi, and affirm Bush's position on "enemy combatants," just as the Court overruled the Florida Supreme Court decision on those ballots in Bush v. Gore.

Careful What You Wish For

According to some civil libertarian types, the Supreme Court decision to hear the Hamdi case is a setback for the Bush administration. Not so, says Pepperdine University law professor Douglas W. Kmiec, who calls the Hamdi decision "a positive development" for the administration, according to the Los Angeles Times. He predicts that the Court will not "interfere with necessary military decision-making", but will "write a narrowly drawn opinion that affirms it in the new and perplexing circumstances on the war on terror".

But Deborah Pearlstein, of the Lawyers Committee on Human Rights, also quoted by the Times, says that the Court's move "sends a clear message that the president's power to detain U.S. citizens is subject to certain limits". Of course, the question is, what limits? Perhaps everything will turn out well, as long as no "enemy combatant" asks to have their vote counted in Florida.

Similarly, Steven R. Shapiro, the national legal director of the ACLU, thinks that Bush administration lawyers "will have a hard time selling [their view on enemy combatants] to the Supreme Court". Let's just hope Bush's lawyers don't use a 14th Amendment equal protection argument.

David Cole, a lawyer and prolific commentator, holds a more nuanced view. Writing in The Nation last December about the November decision of the Supreme Court to hear two cases challenging the detention of hundreds of foreign nationals at Guantanamo, he warns, "Be careful what you wish for".

As Cole points out, the lower courts had unanimously ruled for the Bush administration in the Guantanamo cases. The Supreme Court rarely reviews cases in such circumstances, so civil libertarians were encouraged. "But getting the Court to grant review and winning the cases are two very different matters", Cole continues. Cole then draws a parallel with Korematsu v. United States, where the Supreme Court upheld the internment of Japanese-American citizens and non-citizens during World War II: "The Guantanamo cases may go down in history as Korematsu II."

Bugliosi's views on "enemy combatants" are not known. As a former prosecutor, he might even be inclined to support the Bush administration view of the war on terror. But it is a safe bet that Bugliosi would hasten to point out that the Supreme Court has been given a free pass to condone lawlessness in high places ever since Bush v. Gore. "History will say we should have been in the streets", he prophesied. If there had been a serious challenge to the judicial coup,

(**OLS** *continued on page 6)*

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(**Neo-Cons** *continued from page 1)*
Sonnenfeld. The latter had been previously investigated in 1967. At that time a staff member of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Sonnenfeld was suspected of unauthorized disclosure to an Israeli Government official of a classified document concerning the commencement of the 1967 war in the Middle East. In 1978, Perle was the recipient of an unauthorized disclosure of classified information - specifically a CIA report on alleged past Soviet treaty violations. The leaker (and author) of the report was Agency analyst David Sullivan. CIA Director Stansfield Turner was incensed at the leak, but before he could fire Sullivan, the latter quit. Turner urged Senator Jackson to fire Perle, but the latter was let off with a reprimand. Jackson then added insult to injury by immediately hiring Sullivan to his staff. Sullivan and Perle became friends and co-conspirators, establishing a right-wing network of Congressional staffers they called the "Madison Group," after their usual meeting place, the Madison Hotel coffee shop.

Paul Wolfowitz: Deputy Secretary of Defense

In 1973 in the dying days of the Nixon Administration, Wolfowitz was recruited to work for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). There was a certain irony in the appointment, for in the late 1960's, as a graduate student at the University of Chicago, Wolfowitz had been a student and protege of Albert Wohlstetter, an influential and vehement opponent of any form of arms control or disarmament, vis a vis the Soviets.

Wolfowitz also brought to ACDA a strong attachment to Israel's security, and a certain confusion about his obligation to U.S. national security. In 1978, an inquiry was launched after he was found to have provided a classified document on the proposed sale of U.S. arms to an Arab government to an Israeli Government official, through an AIPAC (American-Israel Public Affairs Committee) intermediary. The inquiry was dropped, however, and Wolfowitz continued to work at ACDA until 1980.

In 1990, after a decade of work with the State Department in Washington and abroad, Wolfowitz was brought into DoD as Undersecretary for Policy by then Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney. Two years later in 1992, the first Bush administration launched a broad inter-departmental investigation of the export of classified military technology to China. Of particular concern was the transfer to China by Israel of U.S. Patriot missiles and/or technology. During that investigation the Pentagon discovered that Wolfowitz had been internally promoting the export to Israel of advanced AIM 9-M air-to-air missiles. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, aware that Israel had already been caught selling the earlier AIM 9-L version of the missile to China in violation of a written agreement with the U.S. on arms resales, intervened to stop the Wolfowitz-proposed AIM 9-M deal. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs at the time was General Colin Powell.

Douglas Feith: Undersec. of Defense for Policy

In a 1992 article in Commentary magazine, Feith wrote that, "It is in the interest of the U.S. and Israel to remove needless impediments to technological cooperation between them. Technologies in the hands of responsible, friendly countries facing military threats, countries like Israel, serve to deter aggression, enhance regional stability and promote peace thereby."

What Feith neglected to say in the article was that he thought individuals could decide on their own whether the sharing of classifiedinformation was "technical cooperation" and unauthorized disclosure, or a violation of U.S. Code Section 794c, the "Espionage Act."

Ten years prior to writing the Commentary piece, Feith had made such a decision on his own. At the time, March 1982, Feith was a Middle East analyst in the Near East and South Asian Affairs section of the National Security Council. Two months before, in January, Judge William Clark had replaced Richard Allen as National Security Advisor, with the intention to clean house at NSC. A total of nine staff members were fired, including Feith, who'd only been with the NSC for a little over a year.

But Feith was fired because he'd been the object of an FBI inquiry into whether, without authorization, he'd provided classified material to a representative of the Israeli Embassy in Washington. Judge Clark, who'd served in U.S. Army counterintelligence in the 1950's, took such matters very seriously.

Bryen and Ledeen

Perle, Wolfowitz and Feith have brought other neo-conservatives into government jobs requiring security clearances, in circumstances in which they had reason to believe that these individuals might be security risks. In 1981, Perle as DoD Assistant for International Security Policy, hired Dr. Stephen Bryen as his Deputy. Bryen, a mere year and a half previously, had been the subject of a formal Justice Department/FBI investigation for possible violation of the Espionage Act ..... with an Israeli Embassy official.

Also in 1981, Wolfowitz as head of the State Department Policy Planning staff had approved the hiring of Dr. Michael Ledeen as a Special Advisor. Ledeen had been carried in the files of the CIA as an unregistered foreign agent for Israel. His supervisor at the time, Noel Koch, Principle Deputy Assistant DoD Secretary for International Security Affairs, had endeavored unsuccessfully to get the FBI to investigate Ledeen for his security indescretions. In 2001 Douglas Feith as DoD Undersecretary for Policy approved the hiring of Ledeen as a consultant in DoD's Office of Special Plans.

CIA DirectorTurner urged Senator Jackson to fire Perle, but the latter was let off with a reprimand.

Perle, Feith and Wolfowitz have also helped each other enter and re-enter government. In 1982, Perle as Assistant DoD Secretary for ISP hired Feith as his Deputy Assistant Secretary for Negotiations Policy. In 2001, Wolfowitz helped Feith obtain his appointment as Undersecretary for Policy. Feith then arranged Perle's appointment as Chair of the Defense Policy Board.

Many individuals with strong attachments to foreign countries, including but not limited to Israel, have served the U.S. Government with honor and distinction.The highest officials in our executive and legislative branches should, however, take great care when appointments are made to posts involving sensitive national security matters. Appointees should be rejected who have demonstrated, in their previous government service, a willingness to sacrifice U.S. national security interests for those of another country, or an inability to distinguish one from the other.CP

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Serving Two Flags (Part Two)

My Corporation, 'tis of thee… Gen. Heebner Salutes GD, GM, and the Stryker

BY JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

On December 10, two Strykers, the Army's newest armored person nel carrier, were patrolling near Balad, Iraq, when the embankment beneath them collapsed and the vehicles plunged into a rain-swollen river. Three soldiers died and another was severely injured. Three days later, another Stryker rolled over a roadside bomb south of Baghdad. The explosion left one soldier injured and the vehicle in flames.

It was an inglorious combat debut for the Army's first new personnel carrier in thirty years. But it confirmed the worst fears of some of the Stryker's critics that the vehicle is unsafe and its crews untrained for using it in combat conditions. One former Pentagon analyst described the 8-wheeled vehicle as "riding in a dune buggy armored in tinfoil."

The Stryker Interim Armored Vehicle is billed as the Pentagon's latest weapon in its new high-tech Army, a fast-moving carrier designed for the urban battlefield and unconventional wars. This fall the Army deployed 300 Stryker vehicles and 3,500 soldiers to Iraq's Sunni Triangle, the California-sized area in central Iraq where the most intense guerrilla fighting is taking place.

But new documents reveal that Pentagon weapons testers had expressed serious reservations about the whether the Strykers were ready for battle. The Pentagon's chief weapons tester, Tom Christie, warned in a classified letter to the Secretary of the Defense that the Stryker is especially vulnerable to rocket-propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices. These are, of course, precisely the kinds of threats faced by the Stryker brigades now in Iraq.

Advertised as rapid deployment vehicles, the Stryker brigades could in theory be rushed anywhere in the world within 96 hours by C-130 transport planes. But numerous internal studies have questioned whether the Stryker can be deployed by C-130s at all. Moreover, a newly released Government Accounting Office report scolded the Pentagon for a host of other problems with the carrier, which was meant to replace the much-maligned Bradley Fighting Vehicle. The GAO report points to serious problems with the Stryker's design and maintenance and discloses deficiencies in training for its use.

Even Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld wanted to delay funding of additional Stryker brigades until more testing and training could be completed. But Congress, ever anxious to spread the pork around to as many districts as possible, didn't heed the warning and approved the additional purchases.

The Stryker is a joint venture of two of the mightiest industrial corporations in America: General Dynamics and General Motors. These companies waged a fierce two-year long lobbying battle, stretching from Capitol Hill to the halls of the Pentagon, to win the $4 billion contract to build 2,131 Strykers, which was awarded in November 2000.

The first Strykers, which cost $3 million a copy, rolled off the assembly line in April, 2002. Presiding over the ceremony at the Stryker rollout in Alabama was then Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki. The Stryker was a key component in Shinseki's plan to upgrade the Army, a scheme he outlined in a 1999 paper titled "Army Vision." In that report, Shinseki called for the development of an interim armored brigade featuring "all-wheel formation". This was a thinly veiled hint that the contract would be awarded to General Dynamics. The Stryker is a wheeled carrier, as opposed to the tank-like vehicles built by United Defense which run on tracks.

During Shinseki's speech in Alabama, he pointedly singled out for special thanks David K. Heebner. Heebner, a former Army Lt. General, had been one of Shinseki's top aides, serving as Assistant Vice Chief of Staff for the Army. As such, he played a key role in pushing for funding for Shinseki's projects, including the Stryker. In November 1999, General Dynamics issued a press release announcing that they had hired Heebner as an executive at the company. The announcement came a full month before Heebner's official retirement date of December 31, 1999.

The timing of the announcement is curious for several reasons. Most glaringly, it's clear that the Army was leaning toward handing a multi-billion dollar contract to General Dynamics at the very time Heebner may have been in negotiations with the company for a high-paying executive position.

Federal conflict of interest laws prohibit government employees from being engaged "personally or substantially in a particular matter in which an organization they are negotiating with, or have an agreement with for future employment, has a financial interest." It's not clear if Heebner recused himself from the negotiations with General Dynamics over the Stryker contract. However, it's very clear that the Stryker deal, despite the reservations

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(**Stryker** *continued from page 5*)

raised by Pentagon weapons testers and the GAO, proved to be very lucrative for both Heebner and General Dynamics. Off the strength of the Stryker deal, Heebner quickly rose to the rank of Senior Vice-President for Planning and Development for General Dynamics, the conduit between the nation's number two defense contractor and the Pentagon. By the end of last year, Heebner amassed more than 13,600 shares of General Dynamics stock valued at more than $1.2 million. "Based on the circumstances surrounding General Heebner's hiring and compensation, and internal Pentagon warnings about the Stryker's vulnerability, further investigation of the Stryker program is required," says Eric Miller, a senior defense investigator at the Project on Government Oversight.

This is the latest in a string of Pentagon scandals involving former Defense Department staffers who pushed for high-ticketed weapons programs, then cashed in by joining the very companies that were awarded with the contracts. Last year, POGO and CounterPunch exposed a sweetheart deal between Boeing and the Pentagon involving the leasing of 21 Boeing tankers to the Air Force. The chief broker of the deal was Darleen

Druyun, who helped craft the scheme while working as deputy assistant secretary for Air Force acquisition and management , then lobbied congress to approve it as an executive at Boeing. Facing allegations of fraud and inside dealing, Boeing fired Druyun in December. The tanker deal is on hold pending congressional and Department of Justice investigations. CP

(**OLS** *continued from page 3*)

Justice Steven's soliloquy on lost confidence in the Supreme Court might have still rung true, and there might have been a more-profound political challenge to the right of the Court and the Bush administration to assume the imperial authority to declare anyone and everyone an "enemy combatant",

"The bottom line is that nothing is more important in a democracy than the right to vote. Without it there cannot be a democracy", Bugliosi wrote. "And implicit in the right to vote, obviously, is that the vote be counted. Yet with the election hanging in the balance, the highest court in the land ordered that the valid votes of thousands of Americans not be counted."

Yet, when push came to shove, Gore, the Democrats, Congress and most of the left abandoned the battle and let the Supreme Court have the last word. Constitutional rights mean nothing if they are not enforced. Remember when there were three branches of government? After September 11, the Voter March crowd and guys like Charles Porter found themselves alone. The National Lawyers Guild even disinvited Bugliosi from its convention.

To be sure, when the opposition to the Iraq war later erupted into public consciousness, every mention of the "unelected" President drew rousing cheers from crowds of thousands of people. But by then, it was just a throw-away line, not a political platform, no more serious than references to Ashcroft's propensity to cover up naked statues.

Even as the Supreme Court moves, in all its pomposity, to "limit" the Bush regime's ability to conduct endless war, the Bush regime is moving ahead at lightening speed to keep us all in line. Immigrants and foreign tourists are now being routinely fingerprinted and photographed when they enter the US. The feds have drawn up a plan to classify all airline passengers into color-coded groups by feeding personal information into huge computer databases, so we can be classified green to go, yellow to be searched and questioned, or red to be barred from flight. Does anyone really think that the Homeland snoops will only use this information to figure out what airplanes we can get on?

The Homeland cops have also established quarantine zones around Bush, wherever he goes, where no anti-Bush signs are allowed, on pain of arrest. U.S. Attorney Strom Thurmond Jr., the former Senator's legitimate (and white) offspring, is prosecuting Brett Bursey of South Carolina for holding up a "No War for Oil" sign during a Bush visit, even though he was standing next to a crowd holding up pro-Bush signs. Bursey is charged under a rarely enforced federal law regarding "entering a restricted area around the president of the United States".

And we should mention that the US is holding thousands of Iraqis in detention centers in Iraq, sort of a Guantanamo in-place, only many times bigger. Or that Bush has established other secret locations around the world for holding other "enemy combatants" picked up from God-only-knows where? Or that, according to Robert Dreyfuss writing in The American Prospect, $3 billion of the $87 billion Iraq appropriation is going to fund a covert CIA paramilitary unit in Iraq, which will likely lead to a wave of extrajudicial killings.

Just can't wait until all this gets to the Supreme Court. CP

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